WHAT INDIA MEANS FOR US by R. Palme Dut

A London Cable

NEW MASSES

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CHURCHILL IN MOSCOW

The world looks for a second front

I RODE THE CONVOY TO RUSSIA

BY SAM HAKAM

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THE ALLIES IN MOSCOW

An editorial

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S visit to Moscow came at a moment when the whole democratic world was experiencing a profound crisis of morale, a sense of gnawing disappointment and frustration over the issue of the second front. For two months, difficult and unbearable in the face of the steadily deteriorating military situation, the peoples of the western world were being told by some newspapers that a second front was unlikely, impossible, and even unnecessary—despite the agreements of last June. What people wanted so badly was a reassurance from our highest military and political leaders. They wanted some kind of sign that would cancel out all the newspaper stories. They wanted the certainty, for example, that the kind of thinking expressed by defeatists and conservative-minded "experts" (unfortunately echoed by Mrs. Roosevelt in a Hunter College, New York, speech last week, deprecating the whole idea of a second front this year) was not really representative of the decisive policy-making circles. In the absence of such assurances, people were getting desperate: the specter of a much more difficult, long drawn-out war and the renewed activity of the "peace-mongers" faced them; some people were worrying about the very character of this war and questioning the very existence and workability of the anti-Hitler alliance. And these moods were aggravated by propaganda against the very idea that people should be expressing themselves on the whole issue.

MR. CHURCHILL'S negotiations with Stalin are in the first place a reassurance. This event serves to clear the air. It greatly improves morale and heightens everyone's readiness for action, no matter at what sacrifice. It establishes a deeper sense of the interdependence of our own fortunes with those of the British and Soviet peoples. It undoubtedly strengthens Mr. Churchill's position at home, which was being shaken by the second front mystification; a new lease of deeper national unity behind the Prime Minister is important for Americans as well as Britons. Those who were so openly drawing all the extreme conclusions from the second front delay—such as Mark Sullivan, speculating about peace terms with Hitler—are at least momentarily rebuffed. For all these reasons, the Churchill and Harriman meeting with Stalin is a welcome thing.

THE chief problems in connection with the second front are those of *scope* and *timing*. In all these months, we have not doubted that the second front is the established strategic outlook of Great Britain and the United States—despite the exaggerated emphasis by some on air power and the very definite minority group in Washington and London who were working toward a stalemate and an exclusive Anglo-American domination of the postwar world. We have not doubted that in the decisive circles concentration on Western Europe and a front on land had been decided. The issue was one of scope and timing. It seemed to us that delay, or limited action combined with delay, would not only force our Russian allies to lose valuable territory and material, but above all, it would jeopardize our position as Americans: it would open up dire perspectives of the loss of the Middle East, India, uprisings in Latin America, a terrible struggle of attrition by separate states with their backs to the wall instead of a struggle of coalition by United Nations with a real perspective of victory. The agreements of last June meant a great step forward in the political understanding of the anti-Hitler powers; but the failure to open the second front, whose urgency the Washington conference recognized, was injurious to all aspects of the war effort, military as well as political.

If Mr. Churchill's visit to Moscow has reemphasized political understanding among the great powers, this is all to the good, and certainly necessary after these two months. *But its chief and distinctive contribution lies in whether agreements of time-coordination of military efforts have been reached.* This is what laymen cannot estimate; events of the immediate future, the disposition of Soviet forces, and so forth will tell. But the grave situation on the Eastern Front and the fact that high military men on both sides, Sir Alan Brooke, Chief of the Imperial Staff, General Wavell, the Soviet Chief of Staff Marshal Shaposhnikov, and Marshal Voroshilov participated so prominently increases the odds that the question of time and scope of the second front are now more clearly understood than they were in June.

"TIME is short," said Gen. Dwight Eisenhower last week. The war is not waiting. The Nazis are pushing ahead, cutting up the western Caucasus, throwing their main weight at the decisive position at Stalingrad, undoubtedly planning to open up at Leningrad, as well as in the Middle East. The RAF's bombardment of Rhodes is a key to German preparations there; so were the convoy battles at Malta. The Soviet bombardments of east Prussia are the clue to what is brewing around Leningrad. The Japanese war-lords must be making up their minds, too. Timely action, complete coordination, a full and whole-hearted will to a full scale offensive is what the moment demands.

After the Churchill visit the morale of the western world is improved, and the desperate appeals for reassuring action that were being made in the last few weeks are in part satisfied. But it would be fatal to fall back into the assumption that the people need no longer manifest their desire for full-scale offensive action in the west.

On the contrary, there is much work to be done, to clarify all the problems of the second front among ever wider sections of the people, to strengthen every phase of the war effort. There is need for solving the acute crisis of production, the shortage of raw materials, the failure to control the production program. There is need for a sharp heightening of war morale in expectation of decisive months of the immediate future.

There is need for an irreconcilable attitude toward everything that damages the war effort, combined with a broad perspective of deeper understanding among all peoples and governments on our side. Given this activity among the people, it will become a force that must influence our military and political leaders in a healthy and decisive way.

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OUR COUNTRY IS IN DANGER

These aren't the Marines that landed on the Solomon Islands, but the Marines are there all right—a thrilling proof of what an offensive spirit can do.

WE HEAR a great deal about a second front to help Russia. Very little is said about the necessity of a second front in western Europe to help America. Yet the fact is that it is not only Russia, but our own country that is in mortal peril as a result of the advance of the Nazi armies. Unless we realize this and grasp its implications, we shall be unable to act with that resolution and decisiveness essential to save ourselves, our independence, our liberties from extinction. Our pledge to Russia is, above all, a pledge to America. And it is America's own interests that constitute the most powerful argument of all for the immediate opening of a second front in western Europe.

As the noted military writer Max Werner pointed out in the August 3 issue of the "New Republic": "The second front should be considered not as a means of relieving Russia, but as the only effective way of waging an Anglo-American war against Hitler Germany." And because the situation is so critical for us, as well as for Russia, Britain, and all the United Nations, any further delay in opening that front only compounds the danger. The element of time has become all decisive.

CAN we afford to gamble with time—with the lives of millions of Americans, with the freedom of our country?

Unfortunately there are some who are willing to make this terribly dangerous gamble, involving far greater risks than even an unsuccessful invasion of Europe. That doddering fuss-budget, Mark Sullivan, masks his opposition to a second front—which is tantamount to opposing the Washington-London-Moscow agreements—by the sage discovery that "A second front in Europe at this time would be at once premature and also belated." (New York "Herald Tribune," August 14.) It is premature, says Sullivan, because we aren't ready, and it is belated because the ideal time was last winter and spring, when the Russians had the initiative—but we weren't ready then, either. It is not surprising that thereupon Sullivan, forecasting a Hitler peace offensive by winter, himself accepts part of the future Hitler propaganda. He tells us that Hitler "will tempt us with one thing that he may to some extent mean. He will say he wants to leave Britain and the United States free to conquer Japan." In other words, according to Sullivan, Hitler does not aim at the subjugation of Britain and the United States. All he seeks is the conquest of Russia, and he even wants America and Britain to remain strong enough to lick Japan.

This has a familiar look—the old, venomous Munich look. That it is related to talk about the second front being "premature" and "belated" is only natural. What this Munichism is driving at is: why fight for Russia?

BUT we are not fighting for Russia. We have built a mighty army, turned our factories into arsenals, and prepared ourselves for every sacrifice because we are fighting for America, because we have no faith in Hitler's word (even with Mark Sullivan's endorsement), because it is either we or they—either we smash the Nazi and Japanese military machines and together with Britain, Russia, China, and all the United Nations free the world from their frightfulness, or we die as a nation.

And because we fight for America, the Red Army is our army, just as are the British, the Chinese, and all the Allied armies. Today our main army is being pressed back as relentlessly as Washington's ragged Continentals were in the summer and autumn of 1776. And just as Washington, after being driven through New Jersey and into Pennsylvania, faced the decision: to cross the Delaware and attack, or continue on the defensive, so we face the great decision today. Had Washington in that dark hour heeded the timid and hesitant, our first War of Independence would probably have been snuffed out in a few months. If we, in our new war of independence, permit the defeatists and confusionists and fainthearts to prevent the carrying through of the offensive strategy agreed upon by the American, British, and Soviet governments, we may seal our own doom. Here is what we risk:

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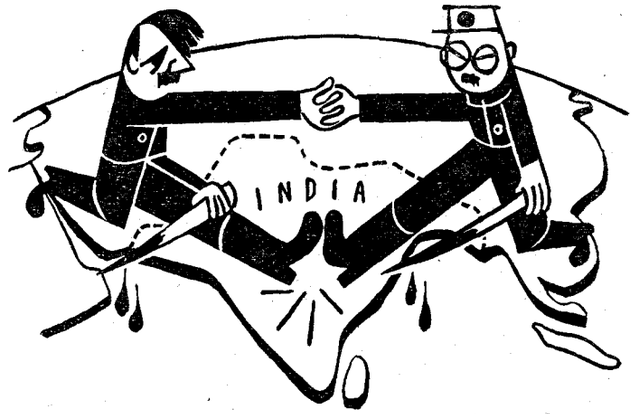
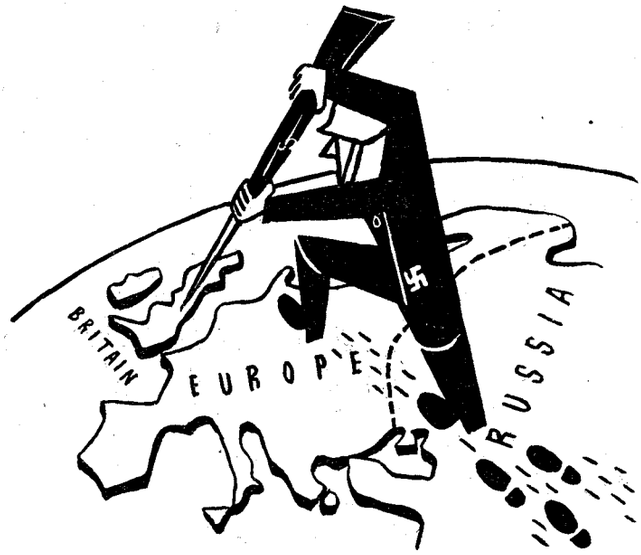
No Second Would Prolong



Nazi-Japanese Junction

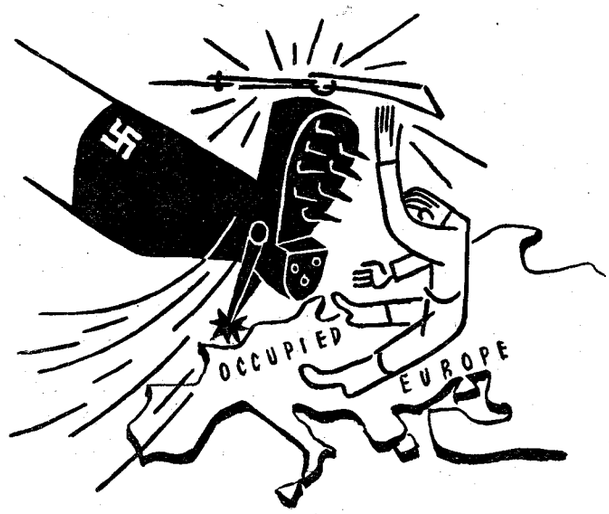
"If Hitler should smash the Red Army in the South and take all of the Caucasus, the United Nations would face the darkest chapter of the war, politically and militarily. Then Turkey might be won over to the Axis; the entire Middle East would be gravely imperiled; the trans-Iranian supply line to the Soviet Union would be virtually worthless; and with our Russian ally hard put to it to keep on fighting, with Japanese intrigue and action in India, the Nazis and their Far Eastern partners might be able to achieve a real junction, in which case they would control the larger part of the Eastern Hemisphere, and our side, facing a struggle of indefinite length, would be forced to fight on a global periphery, against awful odds."—Providence, R. I., "Evening Bulletin," August 3.



Invasion of Britain

"If the Eastern Front collapses, the Nazis can send 100 divisions to the West in case they choose to move in that direction. With no first front left in Russia, when could a second front be opened in western Europe?" —Freda Kirchwey, "Nation," August 8.

"Even a child can see that if Russia is beaten, the position of Great Britain would be desperate. Hitler might then invade and subdue the British Isles. If he did that, the United States would be left alone in the world with the Japanese attacking her on the Pacific side, and Hitler attacking from the Atlantic side—possibly taking over in Canada first and then sending millions of soldiers down into New England."—Springfield, Mass., "Evening Union," July 25.



The Conquered Peoples

"Existing trends in the country's [France's] economic life obviously cannot be reversed until Germany's hold on western Europe is shaken. With every day that passes, the restoration of pre-war physical conditions becomes more difficult, and the damage—which has indirect repercussions far beyond the borders of France —more nearly irreparable. The establishment of a second front in western Europe may therefore literally be termed a life-and-death matter for the future of the French people."—Foreign Policy Association report, August 1.

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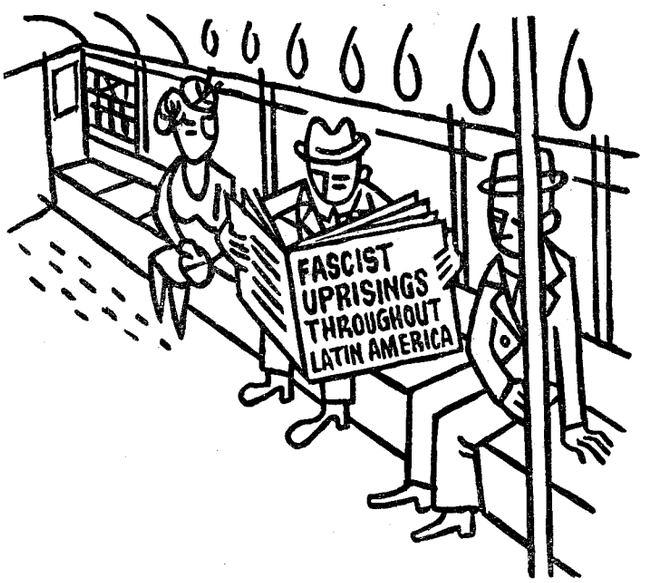
Front Now the War



Latin America

"The inevitable sequel [to the junction of Nazi and Japanese forces in India] would be an invasion of the British Isles, accompanied by an intensification of the campaign to sever communications between America and Britain and between the United States and South America. This in turn would prepare the way for the economic, ideological and military penetration of the Latin republics and for an ultimate frontal assault on the United States from three directions."—Frederick L. Schuman, "New Republic," August 10.

OUR CASUALTY LISTS ARE UNPRECEDENTED...
THE NAZIS NOW HAVE ESTIMATED THREE MILLION MEN ON COAST OF FRANCE...
WE NEED TEN MILLION MORE MEN...

Millions of American Lives

"Somewhere we will have to help defeat the German army in Europe. The longer we delay this actual fight, the more deaths we will be obliged to give in the end for our victory. We pay death now for delay and we pay with Tom's life and with Dick's life."—Ben Robertson, "PM," August 10.

Our Economic Burden: *"The fear of inflation is making the rounds again. There will be plenty of reason to anticipate inflation if a second front does not get going this year, and with it fades out the hope of beating the Axis before our nation is burdened with debt out of all proportion to national income for supporting it."—Harland Allen Economic Letter (Chicago), August 10.*

Negotiated Peace Clamor

"Probably the Germans hope that they can push the Russians back far enough, and deprive them of a sufficient amount of their supplies so that Germany can switch to the defensive on the Russian front, with minimum forces, and confront America and Britain with the bulk of her power in western Europe. . . .

"Then all the old arguments will be trotted out: How can you invade Europe now? How can you hope to overcome us when we have gained so much strength? All Europe is organized under our direction—and, incidentally, the pressure on Vichy and Madrid to join the European bloc will be tremendous. We don't want to injure Britain or America, the Germans will continue. We just want to be left alone in Europe."—Maj. George Fielding Eliot, New York "Herald Tribune," August 10.

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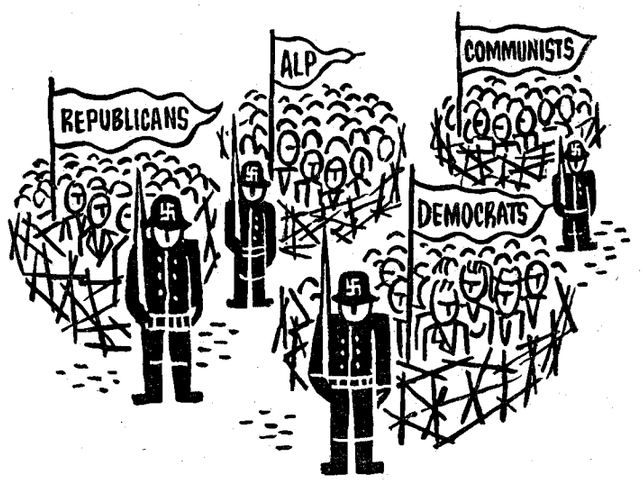
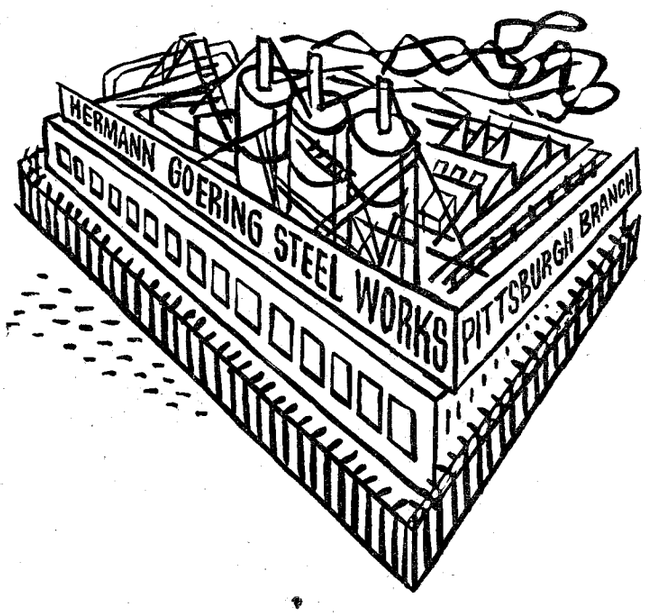
AND PERHAPS LOSE THE WAR





"WE COULD lose this war. We never have lost a war; but it has been remarked that this means only that our ancestors never lost a war; and our ancestors were never up against a war like this. . . . It is a total war in which defeat by our enemies means destruction."—Office of War Information, August 7.

"It is time to face the facts. The hour-glass of the Anglo-American democracies is running lower than it has ever since the Declaration of Independence. The United States and Britain are in immediate danger of losing this war — and can lose it in the next forty days. . . .

"The Caucasus seems terribly remote from American schools, American elections, American free speech—but for all that, all these cherished democratic institutions can receive their mortal blow if ever, and on the very day, that Nazi troops enter Baku. Britain and America cannot defeat Germany and Japan unless at the very least they have Russia as an ally in Europe. Britain and America cannot claim any future right to the support of the huge Russian army unless Anglo-American forces speed to the aid of the Russians in their greatest hour of peril."—Leland Stowe, Chicago "Daily News" and New York "Post," August 4.

"Most of us murmur to ourselves now and then: 'We can lose this war.' Nevertheless, scarcely any of us has even the faintest mental conception of what losing a war today may mean. . . .

"There would be German control forces on parts of our East Coast. There would be Jap control forces on our West Coast. Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, and the Panama Canal Zone would be lost to the enemy. The government in Washington would be headed by some pro-Axis crackpot like William Dudley Pelley. The cabinet, the high posts in the Army and Navy, the G-men, the governors of the states, the local mayors and police chiefs, would be selected from the Silver Shirts, German-American Bundists or Christian Mobilizers.

"A dummy Congress at Washington would speedily enact the Nuremberg racial laws and millions of Jews would be herded into concentration camps, at least a quarter of them being slaughtered or starved to death on the way. . . . The Negroes in the cities would be herded back to labor in the fields of the country's farms. . . .

"Large sections of the country would fall into prolonged stagnation. . . . Our literature, our radio, our drama, our science would wither and almost die under the deadening influences of military censorship, throttling German-Japanese monopoly competition, and wholesale corruption and incompetence in the civil government.

"That picture is no idle fantasy. It is an accurate picture of what we will have in America if we lose the war. It is a literal description of France today—and France, as late as June 1, 1940, was the second largest and most powerful republic in the world."—Arthur Hale, "Confidentially Yours," Mutual Network, August 11.

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HOW BRITONS FEEL ABOUT INDIA

R. Palme Dutt cables that democratic opinion has taken "a critical line on the arrests and urged immediate negotiations." Trial ballots in big factories show a ten to one vote for independence.

London (by cable).

THE situation in India is grave. Grave for the Indian people. Grave for the British people and grave for the cause of the United Nations. It is of the most urgent concern for all the United Nations to exert their endeavors to overcome the present crisis and find a basis for the free and honorable cooperation of the great Indian nation in the alliance of the United Nations for the defeat of fascism and for the freedom of all nations, including India. With fascism at the gates of India, threatening directly to conquer India and to utilize India for its aims of world domination, there is internal crisis and conflict, division between rulers and ruled, arrests of the principal and best known popular leaders, sporadic disorder and police firing—a conflict that must be watched with grim satisfaction by the Japanese generals on the frontiers, or the Axis propagandists in Berlin.

In this most desperate stage of the war when the Axis is making its supreme thrust; when the Soviet people are straining all their forces to resist the Nazi offensive; when the Chinese people are battling against odds; when Japan threatens to attack Siberia; when the Anglo-American powers are straining their resources and need all for the external enemy, not for internal fronts; when the Moscow conference is meeting and the issue of the second front is in the balance—the opening of conflict in India is equivalent to a victory for the Axis and a defeat for the United Nations.

IT IS today universally admitted by all observers that the loss of Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore, Java, Borneo, and the speedy advance of the Japanese in these regions, was above all due to the lack of cooperation between the governments and the peoples. Will the lesson be learned or must this experience be repeated in India with deadly consequences for the whole world fight against fascism? We cannot afford to thrust aside 400,000,000 potential allies and turn them into enemies. We cannot afford to provoke a needless conflict in India for the benefit of fascism.

For this conflict is needless, unjustifiable, indefensible; it is a conflict between opponents of fascism—between two nations who are equally opposed to fascism. The 400,000,000 of India, one-fifth of mankind, are no allies of fascism. They passionately desire national freedom and have struggled for it for decades, with signal self-sacrifice, heroism, and solidarity; but with the exception of an insignificant minority represented by Subhas Chandra Bose in Berlin, they no less passionately hate fascism.

Their sympathies are with the Chinese people, with the Soviet people. Their leaders have understood and proclaimed that the cause of Indian freedom is bound up with world freedom and with world victory over fascism. For the past ten years, under the leadership of men like Nehru, they have played their part in the vanguard of the international anti-fascist front. And they played it at a time when many who now, from the places of power in Britain, denounce them for failing to fight fascism were themselves praising and helping fascism. India is far more deeply and sincerely anti-fascist than many national government ministers in Britain. The demand of the Indian National Congress today is for the recognition of a free India as an ally of the United Nations to mobilize the armed resistance of their people against fascist aggression, under a popular government of their own leaders in whom they have confidence, but fully accepting the supreme military leadership and command of the United Nations.

What sincere democrat or supporter of victory over fascism could oppose such a demand? Yet with all the cards stacked against fascism in India and on the side of the United Nations, with ninety percent of articulate political opinion eager to fight on the side of the United Nations, the policy of the British government has succeeded in performing the brilliant feat of turning the bulk of this popular movement and feeling into bitter hostility, or even active resistance. What are we to think of a policy which produces such fruits? The most outstanding military fiascos of this war can hardly compare with this political fiasco. What are we to think of a policy by which a man like Nehru, a symbol of international anti-fascism, finds himself against his will thrust into a position in which he appears to be struggling in a front opposed to the front of the United Nations?

How has this tragic situation come about? The significance of the transformation of the war in June 1941 was well understood by the Indian national movement. The release of the principal Congress leaders opened the possibility of a new orientation and the beginning of cooperation. The Bardoli resolution of the Indian National Congress in December 1941 declared for armed resistance to the Axis as an ally of the United Nations, provided India could mobilize under a national government. Gandhi passed out of the leadership because of his disagreement with this resolution and the abandonment of non-violence. The way was open, given only a minimum of statesmanship and favorable response from the side of Britain.

The Cripps mission in April destroyed this favorable position. The Cripps mission did immeasurable harm in India. It failed because, under cover of a highly dubious postwar plan, it rejected out of hand any form of responsible national government now. For Indian participation in the war the Congress went to extreme lengths of concession, offering to serve under a British viceroy provided they had real responsibility and powers, and to accept a British commander-in-chief. In vain. They were told that British power must remain dictatorial and absolute, that Indian ministers might at the most control canteens and stationery. They were told to take it or leave it. This take it or leave it attitude gave the impression that there was no real desire to negotiate but rather to prepare the grounds for a future conflict.

Deterioration in the political situation rapidly followed. The British government declared that nothing more could be done. The National Congress, frustrated in its desire to cooperate, slid down the inclined plane toward non-cooperation. Leadership passed back into the hands of Gandhi, the pacifist evil genius of Indian politics. Realistic anti-fascist leaders and advocates of cooperation like Nehru and Azad passed into the wake of Gandhi and his dangerous proposals for a non-cooperation campaign. Unscrupulous reactionary propaganda at once seized on the characteristic utterances of Gandhi, advocating pacifism and appeasement, to smear the whole national movement, although such policies were explicitly repudiated by the national movement.

The Congress resolution was promulgated in July and finally adopted on August 7 (against an opposition vote of thirteen led by the Indian Communist Party, whose restoration of legal rights was a recognition of their growing political influence and strength). The resolution, while reaffirming sympathy for the United Nations and the demand for recognition of India as a free ally under a national government for armed resistance to fascism, added the threat of a civil disobedience

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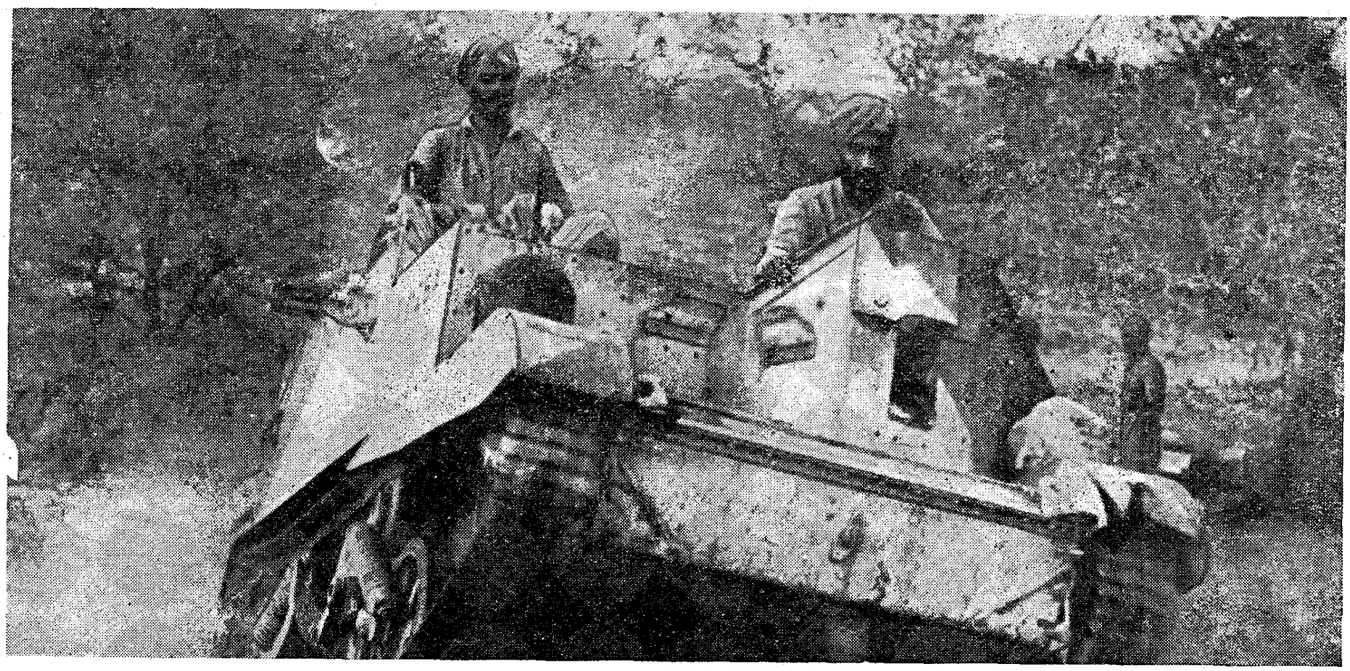

Indian soldiers have distinguished themselves fighting the Nazis in Africa. India's independence would mean mobilization of its people for armed resistance.

campaign in the event of refusal. It is not difficult to understand how sincere Indian patriots and anti-fascists, goaded and provoked by the refusal of their reasonable demands and unable to see the possibility of the positive alternative policy which the Indian Communist Party advocated to combine the pressing of their just political demands with active cooperation in the war effort and resolute resistance to all policies of non-cooperation—it is not difficult to understand how they fell into the fatal trap of adopting the policy of non-cooperation, which could only mean division in the face of fascism, suicidal to the interests of Indian freedom.

BUT while we must deplore this failure of leadership, we cannot but recognize that the heaviest responsibility rests with the reactionary policy which refused India's just demands and thus provoked such an outcome. At last the Congress showed every desire to reach a settlement and to negotiate; the resolution was revised to stress the desire for a practical settlement and for cooperation in armed resistance to fascism; the final speeches of Gandhi and Nehru stressed the desire to negotiate. Within a few hours the wholesale arrests followed, and in turn provoked civil conflict and some sporadic disorders disowned by the Congress, and active repression with widespread police and military action.

It is difficult to see how the policy of repression in preference to negotiation can be regarded as justified by the situation. There was no immediate urgency. No order to civil disobedience had been given. There were obviously no plans ready. The aim of the Congress was manifestly to negotiate. It is not easy to escape the impression that the precipitation of the conflict in this way was dictated by reactionary interests in ruling circles which were more concerned with utilizing a favorable tactical opportunity for crushing the Congress and the popular movement in India than in winning Indian cooperation against Japan.

We need now to do all in our power to remedy this dangerous situation. We must press for the immediate reopening of negotiations with a view to the speediest establishment of a provisional popular government in India, representative of all political sections and leaders who are prepared to cooperate in the common task of armed resistance to fascist aggression as an ally of the United Nations. On this basis we must strive to end the crisis and to establish that cooperation which is equally essential in the interests of India, of Britain, and of all the United Nations. Important sections of democratic opinion in Britain are already pressing for such a solution.

It is unfortunate that the declaration officially issued by the Labor Party and Trades Union Congress on August 12, by swinging completely behind the reactionary policy pursued, and directing its criticism only against the Congress, has failed to respond to the urgency of the situation and is only calculated to deepen the gulf between the peoples of the two countries.

BUT this is not representative of the general body of labor and democratic opinion. Such press organs as the *Manchester Guardian, News Chronicle, Evening Standard,* and also the *Daily Herald* (until the official Labor declaration compelled it to reverse its policy) have taken a critical line on the arrests and urged immediate negotiations. The Miners Federation national conference on August 1, representing 500,000 miners, unanimously adopted a resolution for the reopening of negotiations on the basis of the recognition of India's claim to independence. Trial ballots in big factories have shown a ten to one vote for Indian independence. The campaign of the 50,000 members of the Communist Party has followed the lines of the national conference resolution adopted on May 25, 1942, which declared: "To win the cooperation of the 400,000,000 of India in the common struggle, we must recognize the independence of India as an equal partner in the alliance of the United Nations and reopen negotiations with the National Congress for the establishment of a National Government with full powers, subject only to such restrictions as the Indian people are willing to accept in the interests of India and of the common struggle against the Axis powers."

This demand has won enthusiastic endorsement at crowded mass demonstrations all over the country, as at the mighty rallies of 60,000 Londoners in Trafalgar Square on May 25 and July 26, which combined the demand for the second front with the Indian demand. There is no doubt that the influence of world opinion, and especially of the other chief partners of the alliance of the United Nations, will make itself felt in relation to the present Indian crisis, which is of urgent concern to all, and assist in reaching such a solution. American democratic opinion can play a very important part in mobilizing support for such a policy and exerting its influence to help in securing its adoption.

R. PALME DUTT.

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"EL SEGUNDO FRENTE!"

The magic words you read in the headlines from Mexico City to Valparaiso. What they mean to Latin America. The pro-Axis plotters bank on its delay.

THESE are not yesterday's newspapers I am looking at; the latest is dated August 5, most of them go back through July and June, and many—the cheap paper already yellow, the print smudged—bring back memories of spring and the talk of spring offensives.

These are not as stale as yesterday's newspapers. Their headlines cry out at us with an urgency the more poignant because it has been so long in reaching here, because so many of us have not known before that in Latin America, too, millions pin their hope on the opening of that second front.

Packed in with nitrates from Chile, hides from the Argentine, the tin of Bolivia, sugar from Cuba—these newspapers have passed through the submarine-infested waters of the Atlantic and the Caribbean. The files are not always complete —what were they saying, in Buenos Aires, that week in June whose record is so ominously missing, that week when the torpedoes hit their mark?

"El Segundo Frente!" Those words are front page news in any language, transcending in importance the news from the home front in every land, and at the same time inextricably linked with that home news.

Saturday, May 30, Chile. . . . "GENERAL MARSHALL ANNOUNCES A SECOND FRONT!" Below is another headline, drawing the inevitable conclusion for Chile's men of good will: "CHILE MUST SPEAK THE LANGUAGE OF DEMOCRACY AND DIGNITY."

Friday, June 12, Chile. . . . "ROOSEVELT AND MOLOTOV AGREE TO OPEN A SECOND FRONT IN EUROPE THIS YEAR." And below, "RADICAL PARTY LEADERS SAY CHILE MUST BREAK RELATIONS WITH THE AXIS."

Saturday, June 20, Chile. . . . "ROOSEVELT AND CHURCHILL CONTINUE CONVERSATIONS ON A SECOND FRONT." Below, again, "In more than fifty mass meetings tomorrow, Chile demands a break with the Axis, relations with the Soviet Union."

IT IS the same in Argentina, the cry only a little muted by the strict censorship imposed under President Castillo's state of siege. It is the same in Venezuela, Uruguay, Cuba, Costa Rica. In Mexico even the declaration of war is scarcely bigger news than the promise of speedy victory held out by that second front.

All over Latin America the Churchill-Molotov and Roosevelt-Molotov agreements were considered guarantees that the Western Hemisphere will be defended, that the enemy will be crushed before he can launch his attack—from Africa against the bulge of Brazil, from Japan against the long, inviting, coastline of Chile, from island bases against the Panama Canal and the whole southern continent.

For Argentina and Chile, still maintaining the dangerous fiction of "neutrality," still hesitating to fulfill the pledges given at Rio, the news of a second front agreement had special significance. Here was the weapon the people needed to force their governments to act. Here was the answer to those who asked, some with honest fear, "How can the United States help us if we are attacked?"

"The United States will attack *first,*" cried the people of Argentina and Chile in those first confident days after the signing of the pacts. "The United States, with Britain and Russia, will smash Hitler in Europe, and Argentina and Chile will be saved."

Military commentators explained the strategic significance of a second front in Europe. All the arguments by now so familiar to us here are known to our good neighbors down south. The nut-cracker simile is equally persuasive in Spanish and Portuguese.

Statesmen, congressmen and senators, labor leaders, artists and writers, spokesmen for all groups except the fascists, hailed the second front agreements.

Because they would save Russia? No, because the second front was recognized as the salvation of Mexico and Cuba, Colombia, Peru, Brazil—of the whole hemisphere. Because it was the answer to those defeatists and fifth columnists who say that Argentina and Chile must remain "neutral," since they have not the strength to defend themselves and cannot count on adequate aid from the United States in the event that they invite attack.

Aid from the United States can take many forms: none as effective as the second front in Europe and victory in 1942. They know that in Latin America, and that is why the democratic forces in Chile and Argentina were strengthened last spring and their hopes of bringing their countries into the fighting front of the United Nations grew brighter.

IN URUGUAY the trade unions organized a great mass meeting, in which official representatives of the government participated and the call for national unity in support of the United Nations rang out. Dr. Emilio Frugoni, leader of the Socialist Party, declared, "The great importance of this act is that the alliance forges a formidable instrument of war. Its first result will be the opening of a second front this year."

It is sobering to look through these old newspapers, to realize afresh how much time has elapsed since that great upsurge of hope and confidence in Latin America greeted the promise of a second land front—soon. For Sevastopol still stood fast, and the Russian offensive power on the long central front was unimpaired. The war seemed far from the Don and the oil of Maikop safe.

There was, in those May and June papers, a tremendous enthusiasm and admiration for the heroic defenders of Sevastopol. And there was something more, a new note of enthusiasm and admiration for the United States.

The old fear and suspicion of the "Colossus of the North" had given way to a pride in this great neighbor; pride in our strength, our offensive spirit, our pledge to match the valor of the Red Army with mighty Yankee blows struck, not for ourselves alone, but for our sister republics of the hemisphere, for all mankind.

Here is a picture of William Green, speaking at the June 22 rally in Madison Square Garden and calling for a second front—now!

Look at some of these headlines from Chile: YANKEE WORKERS AND FARMERS IN THE FIRST LINE OF THE COUNTRY'S DEFENSE.

Here is a tribute to General MacArthur and the fighters at Luzon.

Here is praise for Doolittle, and another headline: THE

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AGGRESSIVE SPIRIT OF THE UNITED STATES DEMANDS THE OPENING OF A SECOND FRONT!

Yankee production records come in for their share of glory. The trade union movement is called *"El Paladin del Segundo Frente, el Primer Patriota de Estados Unidos."*

Latin military men, returning home from the United States, boast of the US Army, its men, its training, and its equipment.

In Latin America they were saying, back in June and July, that the Colossus of the North would soon show Hitler a trick or two. And they gloried in our strength and fighting spirit, seeing in these their own bulwark against Nazi enslavement.

Part of this new respect and friendship for us stems from the conviction that we will use our strength well and boldly, that the American giant will not sit idly by while the Russian giant bears the brunt of battle alone.

NOR is there any disposition in Latin America to shirk, and leave the job to Uncle Sam. Everywhere there are committees of aid to the free peoples, to the fighters in the common cause. Workers and peasants dig up their hard-earned centavos and pesos. It is touching to read that, in Uruguay, the collections are to be divided equally "between Britain, Russia, the United States, and China." Have we earned our share of that aid?

Not only contributions of food, clothing, and medicine are called for. The cry for more production goes up all over the hemisphere—production for that second front. Argentina has just sent its fourth shipload of relief supplies to the Soviet Union. But in Argentina the main job is to break through the stranglehold of Castillo's state of siege and let the anti-fascist will of the Argentine people prevail. The battle against the fifth column goes on, and this too is closely bound up with the problems of the second front. In Uruguay they say that the *Herreristas,* the native fascists, will be easily overcome when the fascist centers in Berlin and Rome are destroyed. The Spanish Falange is everywhere in Latin America, carrying on the work of Hitler agents expelled after we went to war and nineteen republics broke relations with the Axis. A second front will mean that at long last we shall cease appeasing Franco—and in that Latin America sees the only guarantee of a final accounting with the Falange.

BUT, meantime, the fifth column remains a powerful and dangerous tool in Hitler's hands. It is using the delay in the opening of the second front to sow suspicion and defeatism in Latin America as elsewhere.

President Castillo is also using our delay in taking the offensive to bolster his government and excuse his pro-Nazi policy. He recently told a closed meeting of Argentine military men that the United Nations will lose this war, and that if the second front comes it will come too late.

From time to time in the last few months I have talked with a young Argentine businessman temporarily in this country. He is honest and intelligent, but politically illiterate. I have not found those conversations very comforting. Up to the time of the torpedoing of the Argentine ship, the *Rio Tercero,* my friend defended the Argentine policy of "neutrality," while condemning Castillo's domestic policies and passionately declaring his hatred of Hitler. After the attack on the *Rio Tercero* he was ready to fight and denounced Castillo as a traitor to his country. In these last days my friend has become cynical and bitter. All his latent distrust of Britain and the United States expresses itself in a conviction that we are deliberately letting the Soviet Union down, that our promises were made in bad faith. He has lost hope of a United Nations victory, and with it all will to fight.

Of course, it is not well to generalize too much from a single example. But if there are many like my friend in Latin America, the Axis will know how to use their disillusionment and defeatist mood. Disappointment in the good intentions and courage of the Colossus of the North is a dangerous thing, especially if coupled with the belief that the Colossus is no longer all-powerful, but on the contrary temptingly weak. Why take seriously the promise of the Good Neighbor Policy if the promise of the Roosevelt-Molotov agreement is not kept? Why rely on a strong neighbor who will not use his might to defend even his own national interests?

That kind of logic leads to conclusions better left unexpressed. But, while the majority of Latin Americans firmly reject such logic, we cannot ignore the fact that the longer we put off the decisive act, the longer the Axis has to exercise its powers of persuasion.

Not only our military defeats, but our political mistakes as well, give ammunition to the Axis propagandists. Nor is the apparent success in the Solomons enough to outbalance the classic stupidity of British policy in India for 100,000,000 Latin Americans who have their own reasons for hating imperialism. The opening of a second front involves both political and military factors. It can only be achieved through the defeat of those American and British cliques whom our Latin cousins most hate and fear.

For these reasons, too, delay is worse than dangerous and time, in Latin America as elsewhere, works for the Axis.

There is a healthier tone in the latest papers from Cuba and Mexico. The great second front meetings in Trafalgar Square, in our own Madison Square Park, in Glasgow and Liverpool, are headline news. They sent Latin American faith and hope soaring again.

Recent speeches by Vicente Lombardo Toledano, Mexican labor leader and president of the powerful Latin American Confederation of Labor (CTAL), have helped to rally the Latin American masses to the side of the United Nations. Lombardo's trip through the principal Latin American countries this fall will undoubtedly further clarify for them their stake in the war and their own obligation to help speed the victory.

"If a second front is opened now," Lombardo recently told a press conference, "the war can be won within a few months. If not, it may go on for several years. A second front represents a rapid victory not only for Russia, England, or the United States, but for all the peoples. And a second front now also means saving the Latin American countries from incalculable sacrifice."

WHILE our neighbors in Latin America have an equal stake with us in the immediate opening of a second front, the job of carrying out the pledge of the Anglo-Soviet-American agreements rests primarily on our shoulders.

Our neighbors are fighting valiantly against their internal enemies, demanding the end of the "neutrality" farce in Chile and the Argentine, exposing the fifth column, stepping up production, calling for universal military service, for national unity, for the establishment of diplomatic and trade relations with the Soviet Union, and organizing committees of aid to all the fighters against Nazism.

Yes, our neighbors are doing their part. And they believe we will do ours. They believe in the good faith of President Roosevelt, in the courage and military skill of our MacArthurs, Marshalls, and Eisenhowers. They believe in the fighting spirit of the American labor movement—that *"paladin del Segundo frente"*—and they are dead sure the Yanks have got what it takes to beat Hitler.

We believe in those things ourselves. We know the Axis fifth column in Latin America lies when it says we will "let Russia down." The point is that we cannot and will not let ourselves down—and by "ourselves" we mean all of the Americas.

MARION BACHRACH.

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